

News Release

U of M Crookston to host Thriving by Design Conference

By Itollefts on Monday, July 7, 2014

The University of Minnesota Extension Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships (RSDPs) will host "Thriving by Design," a rural design conference at the University of Minnesota Crookston on Wednesday and Thursday, July 30-31, 2014. The event will be held from the evening of Wednesday, July 30, 2014, through the afternoon of Thursday, July 31.

Registration is available online at rsdp.umn.edu. In-person registration opens Wednesday, July 30, 2014, at 4 p.m. and Thursday, July 31 at 7:30 a.m. in Bede Ballroom in Sargent Student Center. The registration fee is \$75.

Design process inherently takes a systematic approach to defining problems and developing solutions. The system connects various components across sectors and disciplines as well as geographic and time scales. This conference will focus on three tracks or lenses through which to view these systems, and the challenges to be addressed.

Nature-based recreation and tourism focuses on the natural landscape and habitats, and the many ways people enjoy time in nature.

Food system explores cropping systems, food production at garden and farm scales, and the decisions people make individually and collectively about food choices.

Extension Reconsidered offers an opportunity to reflect on the role of University of Minnesota Extension over the past century and to consider the ways Extension can meet the challenges Minnesotan communities will face in the coming decades.

Dewey Thorbeck, director for Center of Rural Design, says, "Rural and urban futures are inextricably linked through design thinking integrating human, animal, and environmental wellness."

A discussion featuring several panel guests from a variety of professions and areas of expertise will take place on Thursday, July 30 at 9:00 a.m. This discussion will address areas of concern within each track followed by a question and answer period. Breakout sessions will run from 12:30 p.m. and end at 4:30 p.m. Breakout sessions will provide participants an opportunity to learn how to apply design thinking and the design process to address the challenges faced by a community or organization through an iterative and collaborative approach to problem solving.

A traveling rural design exhibit will also be displayed throughout the conference.

Community leaders, elected officials, and planners, especially those from rural and small urban areas, designers, and anyone interested in learning about the use of design and design thinking as a problem-solving opportunity are encouraged to attend. You will gain experience in visualizing and using design to achieve, sustain, and strengthen community vitality across our region. By using design and design thinking techniques, you will help create, select, and frame ideas and goals that can inform Minnesota's community development.

The conference is sponsored by The University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, a part of UMN Extension; the UMN Center for Rural Design; University of Minnesota Crookston; the EDA Center at the University of Minnesota Crookston; and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota Center for Prevention.



For more information contact Linda Kingery at 218-281-8697.

To learn more about the work of the Northwest Regional Partnership go to <http://blog.lib.umn.edu/rsdp/northwest>.

The Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships (RSDPs) give communities in Greater Minnesota access to the University of Minnesota in order to help solve problems and take advantage of new opportunities. As a part of University of Minnesota Extension, NW RSDP brings together local talent and resources with University of Minnesota knowledge and seed funding to drive sustainability in four areas: agriculture and food systems, tourism and resilient communities, natural resources, and clean energy.

In the photo: A traveling rural design exhibit will be displayed throughout the conference.

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